

## ROSH HASHANAH SPEECH 5779

Good Morning.

On August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the rain came pouring down in Delaware Valley. It came down hard, directly over King of Prussia. Roads were flooded. The Schuylkill was closed. It was something totally unexpected – it caught everyone by surprise. And then, came this email:

*Dear Congregants,*

*The drains clogged at the top of the Temple driveway, with tall debris washing down, and flooded through the front doors of the synagogue.*

*There is ankle deep water in the front door and in the hallway.*

*I am here by myself, and need some help moving things, especially prayer books in the Ritual Closet.*

*If anyone is near TBA and can offer some help....please come.*

*Thanks,  
Cindy*

People rushed to the synagogue. They scooped out the water, emptied the Ritual closet, and protected the Sanctuary, Social Hall and the Gift Shop from more damage. Because of the quick action of Cindy, the clean up by Frank and the incredible efforts of this group, we avoided a major disaster. However, damage was still done. The damage wasn't covered by our insurance. This flood is a story of unforeseen expense to remediate and repair the damage. It's also a story of community, pulling together to secure our Jewish home.

Cindy reached out, and you said Hineni, Here I am. Thank you to all who answered Cindy's call to action.

And another thank you for those who answer last year's Special Appeal to fund Phase One of the HVAC project to replace the units serving the Office, Rabbi's study and lobby. We are in the final stages of that work.

All of us continue to personify who we are as a community – lending a helping hand and embracing the goals we set last year – engage our membership, engage in Social advocacy and justice activities and engage in learning.

Leadership extended these goals for this year, not because we haven't achieved them, but because they resonate with who we are as a congregation. We want to always engage, educate, and enhance our experiences. We want to be Jewish, live a Jewish life, and practice Tikkun Olam.

How will we do that?

We'll review our governance model as directed in the Bylaws. The Governance Committee takes on this effort, as well as working to enhance the experience of our leaders through training and support. They're open to any feedback from the congregation on these initiatives, so please reach out.

We'll support each other through difficult times with a Healing Circle. We will come together in song, prayer and meditation to help each other meet our challenges. Join us one Sunday a month for this powerful expression of community.

We'll register people to vote as an initiative of The Social Action Team's Non-partisan Civic Engagement campaign. We want everyone to know the power of their voice by encouraging them to participate in our national right.

We'll begin the Parking Lot entryway project, creating a warm and welcoming entrance for wheelchairs, strollers and striders made possible by a grant from the Saligman Family Foundation in memory of Ira Saligman.

We'll entertain and raise some money! BINGO returns October 14th. We have prizes galore and tons of fun, so don't miss it. And, we are planning an exciting evening in May 2019. Look for more information soon.

This is just a part of what we have planned for our vibrant community with a lot of heart. A home of education, worship and holiday celebrations. A story of friends and family making a Jewish home in King of Prussia.

So, share our story of shabbat and simchas. Of learning and social action.

Share our story, 50 years in the making. Yes, we will be 50 years old in 2021. We deserve to celebrate! There'll be a Mishkan to fund our pressing needs, events to enliven our community, and opportunities for doing Tikkun Olam with a commitment to our future and an appreciation of our past. If you want to help us plan, please see me.

Share our story with your friends and neighbors. If you don't share, who will?

Share... because we must.

Our membership level was at a high in 2012. That's 6 years ago. Unfortunately, we haven't reached that level since. We know that affiliation numbers are decreasing throughout the Jewish community, and we are feeling it here at TBA.

Our Annual Campaign each year shines a spotlight on what we need to bring a year of engagement to fruition. This year's Annual Campaign goal is \$146,000. That's the difference between what we need and what has been pledged. So, I ask us all to dig deep and make a commitment to support our synagogue. Let's reach 100% participation in the Annual Campaign.

Our Leadership is always planning for our future, so TBA will be here for the next 50 years. We can't look away from what's on the horizon - Phase 2 of the HVAC replacement. This cost, still to be determined, is not included in our budget.

Yes, our story has challenges. But it also has joy and doing mitzvot. It's one of engagement and education, a helping hand and a caring heart, a Jewish commitment to Torah, Brit and Avodah.  
T. B. A.

As we enter 5779, let us all

Do more than belong: participate.

Do more than care: help.

Do more than believe: practice.

Do more than be fair: be kind.

Share our story. Let everyone in on this great thing known as TBA.

L'shana tovah from my family to yours.